

# Call for Submissions: *Feminist Africa* 2021

## *Gender and Sexuality in African Futurism*

### Volume 3, Issue 1

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All submissions and enquiries should be emailed to: [info@feministafrica.net](mailto:info@feministafrica.net)

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How does the African Futurist genre (re)imagine gender norms, sexual identities, and issues of feminism on the continent? This special issue will explore questions of gender and sexuality in “African Futurism,” a term that has gained currency since Nigerian-American novelist Nnedi Okorafor used it in a November 2018 Twitter post. Our contributors draw from African sources to explore how African Futurism has become a cultural genre exploring varied ideas about gender and sexuality in African cultures, as these are expressed and performed in ways that traverse and transcend time and space.

Contributors to FA Vol 3 Issue 1 ask what “African Futurism” comprises, and explore its relationship to the older term “Afrofuturism”, a cultural movement that emphasized philosophical, technological and aesthetic features of Black cultural expression and performance in the African diaspora. Well-known explorers of Afrofuturism include scholars (Mark Dery, Ytasha Womack, and Reynaldo Anderson), novelists and short story writers (Octavia Butler, Samuel R. Delaney and Nalo Hopkinson) and singers (Sun Ra and Janelle Monáe). While Western Afrofuturists acknowledge how cultural exchange across the Atlantic influenced Afrofuturism, continental Africans have suggested that Afrofuturism does not adequately address the continent and its peoples, fails to reflect contemporary and indigenous cultures, experiences, and histories, thereby failing to distinguish continental Africa’s contribution to the futurist imaginary. For example, South African writer Mohale Mashigo argued in *The Johannesburg Review of Books* that “Afrofuturism Is Not for Africans Living in Africa.”<sup>i</sup> This issue of FA defines “African Futurism”, as a genre concerned with the connection between cultural expressions, performances, and technology emerging from *within* the African continent, and the history, science, and philosophies of peoples *who live there*. It draws from the repertoire of continental history, culture, philosophies and mythologies. It offers critiques of present-day conditions, and imagines alternative possibilities for the future. Contributors are invited to explore how Africa-centered conceptions of technology, time and space, and the invocation of *African* spirits and deities, are used to imagine the African superheroes presented in comic books, fiction, film, digital art, photography and games.

However, both African Futurism and Afrofuturism depict profoundly patriarchal African cultures. As African women have become the main protagonists of African Futuristic works, we ask whether the emergence of contemporary African Futurism has greater transformative potential for African women than Afrofuturism as continental authors claim?

*Feminist Africa* Vol 3 Issue 1 explores how diverse portrayals of gender, sexuality, and feminism in the African Futurism genre complicate understandings of the lived realities, past and present, of women living on the continent. Contributions from North Africa, Francophone, Lusophone and Queer African communities are particularly welcome.